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RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 1539
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STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR XOX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
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SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

[11. Mideast](#)

[12. Iran](#)

Key stories in the media:

The Jerusalem Post cited Israeli assessments that the U.S. and Israel both believe that QIran could, but probably won't, build a bomb within a year.Q According to these appraisals, there is not

much difference now between the U.S. and Israel regarding a timeline for a "worst case scenario" on Iran's development of a bomb. At the same time, both Jerusalem and Washington reportedly currently believe that the "worst case scenario is not likely to materialize."

The newspaper quoted a senior GOI official who deals with the issue as saying: "I would be careful about all the declarations on this matter." The official added that a decision by Tehran to go full throttle toward the building of a bomb would depend on numerous different decisions the government would have to make, and which it had simply not yet made. Major media quoted French President Nicolas Sarkozy as saying at the G-8 meeting in Italy that an Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would be an absolute catastrophe.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that President Shimon Peres presented Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak with an offer for land exchanges between Israel and the Palestinians. HaQaretz and Yediot reported that the G-8 leaders urged Hamas to free Gilad Shalit without delay.

Leading media reported that Mubarak blames Israel for the failure of the talks to release Shalit, because it has set new conditions for the deal. Yediot reported that Mubarak made the same remark in an interview with the newspaper. Israel Radio quoted senior GOI officials in Jerusalem as saying in response that Hamas is responsible for the situation. The station reported that Israel rejected 125 names in the list of 450 prisoners presented by Hamas and asked Hamas to submit a new list, but Hamas has not done so. The radio later quoted Egyptian sources involved in the talks as saying that the negotiations over Shalit's release will resume.

Maariv provides a review, based on reports by PA security officials, of Hamas's future plans, both in regard to rebuilding its rocket arsenal and military after Operation Cast Lead, as well as an alleged decision by the Hamas leadership, both internal and external, to renew terror attacks from the Gaza Strip very soon, starting with attacks on IDF troops along the border, and graduating to rocket fire against Israeli communities. These attacks, say the PA officials, will be carried out by "independent" organizations such as Jaljalat. They also described Hamas's new defenses, which include landmines, explosives charges, and booby-trapped tunnels, along with a massive rocket fire array with better firing capability and longer range.

Yediot reported that President Obama will exceptionally convene the leaders of the American-Jewish community on Monday and tell them that he is determined to reach a permanent-status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians during his term; he will reportedly urge Israel to do its part, including freezing construction in the settlements. The newspaper says that this is a means of pressuring Netanyahu. Yediot quoted sources in Washington as saying that National Security Adviser Uzi Arad, who said this week in interviews with news agencies that there is a conflict of interests between the U.S. and Israel regarding the Iranian issue, might burn the ties with the U.S.

Leading media reported that last week PM Benjamin Netanyahu told visiting German FM Frank-Walter Steinmeier that Judea and Samaria [i.e. the West Bank] cannot be Judenrein. The term was employed by Nazis to refer to areas that had been cleansed of Jews.

The Jerusalem Post reported that the IDF is considering allowing the PA to establish a specially trained PA counter-terror squad -- a scaled-down version of the IDF's elite reconnaissance units -- qualified to carry out pinpoint operations against Hamas terrorist cells in the West Bank.

The Jerusalem Post reported that, three years after the Second Lebanon War, the army is preparing border communities for a new scenario -- an infiltration and ensuing shootout.

Yediot ran a lengthy feature on U.S. Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe hints that Mitchell may have personal business interests in the PA via the Middle East Investment Initiative.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe quoted Dani Dayan, Chairman of the Yesha Council of Jewish Settlements in the Territories, as saying that the agreement with the U.S. on a construction freeze in the settlements is an illusion. The daily said that the council fears new Israeli

concessions on the construction issue.

Maariv reported that yesterday Egyptian authorities arrested 25 people suspected of planning a terrorist attack on the Suez Canal. Egyptian officials were quoted as saying that the group is linked to elements in Gaza.

HaQaretz reported that the Judge Advocate General, Brig. Gen. Avichai Mandelblit, told the human rights group B'Tselem yesterday that the army does not classify .22 caliber bullets as suitable for dispersing demonstrators. According to B'Tselem, the use of .22-caliber bullets resulted in the death of at least two unarmed Palestinians.

HaQaretz reported that four Jews -- members of the Jewish Defense League -- were arrested in Paris on Wednesday on suspicion of vandalizing a pro-Palestinian bookshop. The Jerusalem Post reported that UK Jews and Muslims are increasingly concerned over possible terror by neo-Nazis.

Yediot ran a feature about American Rabbi Sam Gordon, who supported Barack Obama during the presidential campaign.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Police Cmdr. Uri Bar-Lev will travel to the U.S. in August to take up his new position as the Israel Police and Internal Security Attaché in Washington. Bar-Lev plans to use his office to further Israeli-American cooperation on intelligence, terrorism, drug smuggling, and organized crime, and to bolster Israel's image in the U.S. Yediot reported that yesterday Yaniv Haziza, a senior member of Yitzhak Abergil's criminal organization, was extradited to the U.S. About five years ago, he was indicted in a Californian court on Ecstasy-related charges.

II. Mideast:

Block Quotes:

II. "Does He, or Doesn't He?"
Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (7/10): QNetanyahu's rivals, and foremost among them opposition head and Kadima Knesset Member Tzipi Livni, are convinced that, although the Prime Minister is saying Qtwo states,Q he doesn't mean it.... Nevertheless, Netanyahu cannot retract his Qtwo states for two peoples.Q And he has a clear political interest in following this path, which has taken him from the position of extreme rightist during the election campaign to that of a national leader at the heart of the consensus. QHe has gone from being QBibi 50 percentQ to QBibi 70 percent, an American observer, who is savvy about Israeli politics, commented this week. In the Bar-Ilan speech, Netanyahu talked about the security guarantees he will request of the international community, particularly from the United States. Then he explained that he didn't mean the deployment of American soldiers in Nablus and Jenin, but rather diplomatic guarantees. It has been clarified that the Prime Minister has adopted the Qeight-point documentQ that his predecessor Ehud Olmert presented to the Bush administration. The points themselves are quite trivial: total demilitarization of the Palestinian state, foreign observers on the border with Jordan, the Rafah border crossing under European supervision, Israeli control of the air space and the assignment of military radio frequencies. Barak raised demands like those at Camp David nine years ago; Olmert rephrased them and according to his people obtained American agreement to them. Netanyahu wants to get those guarantees from Barack Obama in writing, so as to ensure that Israel will enjoy international legitimacy for its security concerns regarding the establishment of the Palestinian state. If Netanyahu adopts the security provisions in the permanent status agreements that Barak and Olmert spoke about at Camp David and Annapolis respectively he will not be able to shake off their other provisions -- first and foremost the crucial maximum withdrawal from the West Bank and the evacuation of most of the settlements. He, after all, invented the slogan, QThe more they give, the more they'll get.Q Anyone who wants to get security guarantees will have to give territory. A lot of territory.

II. "Give Substance to the Vision"

Editor-in-Chief David Horovitz wrote on page one of the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (7/10): QLike it or not -- and opinion polls carried recently by The Jerusalem Post strongly suggest the latter -- the worldQs only superpower appears to have decided that IsraelQs best interests require it to freeze construction beyond the Green Line.... For all that Netanyahu is today veritably extolling the virtues of the two-state vision he had so long resisted, for all the pressures he is now beginning to feel from within his own party, from all the precariousness of the current relative stability in the West Bank and the inconvenient truth that a robust terrorist organization rules Gaza, the Obama administration seems bent on what it sees as saving Israel from itself.... It seems convinced it can create a climate via Israeli concessions in which true Palestinian compromise and wider Arab reconciliation will flourish. So if, as he now declares, the Prime Minister has a vision, let him urgently transform its sketched parameters into substance. If, as he now claims, he can drive a better bargain than his predecessors, let him move beyond the rhetoric.... For if we donQt make up our minds, if the Prime Minister doesnQt make up his mind, the signs are multiplying that others are bent on making our minds up for us. And while we may be untenably confused and conflicted, they may be dangerously ignorant.

III. "In the Footsteps of Sam LewisQs Suck-Ups"

Columnist Sarah Honig wrote in The Jerusalem Post (7/10): QItQs doubtful any other state anywhere would be treated with similar disrespect, not by inimical leaders like Obama, but even by emissaries like George Mitchell. Ours is to do their bidding even at our palpable peril. The more Netanyahu delays forthrightly defying such international chutzpa, the more he invites it. There are times when seemly circumspection is contraindicated. Begin by now would have called the American ambassador to order and sent an unequivocal message to said ambassadorQs boss, even at the risk of local sycophants to brownnose the latter-day [U.S. ambassador] Samuel Lewis.

----- 12. Iran: -----

Block Quotes: -----

"Buds of Sobering Up in Washington"

Columnist Uri Heitner wrote in the nationalist, Orthodox Makor Rishon-Hatzofe (7/10): QOne should hope that the latest events in Iran and North Korea will drop a penny with Obama. He is perhaps starting to understand that appeasement vis-a-vis evil will not bring about peace in our time, the same way ChamberlainQs policy towards Hitler did not do so, but led to the harshest war of all. Obama is perhaps starting to sober up and to understand that in order to create a better world, you must fight evil and defeat it.

CUNNINGHAM